

Planning for Layoffs

Introduction

When a decision is made that a layoff is necessary within a department or class of positions, it is usually the result of our business needs and/or environment. Reductions are driven by work activities no longer required, changes in customer needs, legislative actions and/or budget reductions. Workforce Planning and Redeployment initiatives can assist with minimizing the need for layoffs, but reductions may be inevitable. Reductions often result after such redeployment efforts as retraining, transfers, demotion, promotion, reassignment, reduced hours/job sharing, shadowing, shared workforces, etc. have been exhausted.

Layoff process objectives are:

- To conduct the individual job changes resulting from restructuring or re-engineering in a way that is consistent with our value of respect for employees
- To provide an environment which employees perceive as positive and supportive
- To provide features and options which give employees some control over their careers and to reduce or minimize the negative impact of involuntary separations when possible.

Redeployment Services, the umbrella of the layoff events, has a primary goal to assist employees with the transition to their new career opportunities. The more “choices” an employee has in his/her decision making process relative to a change that affects them, the more successful the employee will be in achieving a smooth transition. Thus, an employee who has been given the resources to explore career change options and has taken personal responsibility for his/her career choice will feel in control of his/her destiny. This can turn an otherwise frightening, uncontrollable event into an exciting opportunity to pursue new career options or directions.

Some of the Layoff Process features that can help to create a positive situation and give employees more control in their careers are:

- A voluntary program should be considered when the number of positions to be eliminated makes this program cost effective and appropriate. It can offer employees with the State such enhanced program features as a severance package, retirement/financial planning, life transition and/or outplacement type services. This program, when properly designed, allows employees who might be affected to make their own choice and often eliminates or significantly reduces the number of employees who will be asked to “involuntarily” terminate their employment.
- Retirement planning to assist employees in understanding where they are financially, and the kind of needs they have and must consider for retirement.
- Network alliances with Minnesota Workforce Centers and private sector employers to link career and/or consultive opportunities with outplaced employees’ qualifications and competencies.
- Employee Assistance Program services to help individuals and families cope throughout the transition.
- Management training to provide supervisors with tools to assist employees through the layoff processes, plus focus on the impact these changes have on co-workers, supervisors, and performance.

- Employee training sessions to inform affected employees of all options and resources available.
- Layoff Coordinator, assigned at the local or agency level, to provide individual assistance to employees with processing options and arranging resources.

The tools within the layoff processes empower our people and organizations with the tools to facilitate successful change for employees affected, as well as the organizations and employees that remain.

Change in the next decade is inevitable. Technology, legislation, budgets, and our ever-changing customer needs and environment have made change the “normal” culture for work today.